

OPEN SPACE AGREEMENT

This Agreement, made this the _____ day of _____, 20____, between _____, hereinafter called the “owner”, and the County of Loudoun, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, hereinafter called the “County”, recites and provides as follows:

RECITALS

1. **WHEREAS**, the Owner is the owner of certain real estate, identified by Loudoun County Tax Map No. _____ and described more fully in Exhibit A which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, hereinafter called the “Property”; and
2. **WHEREAS**, the County is the local governing body having real estate tax jurisdiction over the Property; and
3. **WHEREAS**, the County has determined:
 - a. that it is in the public interest that the Property should be provided or preserved for

 - b. that the Property meets the applicable criteria for real estate devoted to open-space use as prescribed in Article 4 (§58.1-3229 et seq.) of Chapter 32 of Title 58.1 of the Code of Virginia, and the standards for classifying such real estate prescribed by the Director of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Historic Resources; and
 - c. that the provisions of this Agreement meet the requirements and standards prescribed under §58.1-3233 of the Code of Virginia for recorded commitments by landowners not to change an open-space use to a non-qualifying use; and
4. **WHEREAS**, the Owner is willing to make a written recorded commitment to preserve and protect the open-space uses of the Property during the term of this Agreement in order for the Property to be taxed on the basis of a use assessment and the Owner has submitted an application for such taxation to the assessing officer of the County pursuant to §58.1-3234 of the Code of Virginia and Chapter 848 of the Codified Ordinances of Loudoun County, Virginia; and
5. **WHEREAS**, the County is willing to extend the tax for the Property on the basis of a use assessment commencing with the next succeeding tax year and continuing for the term of this Agreement, in consideration of the owner’s commitment to preserve and protect the open-space uses of the property, and on the condition that the Owner’s application is satisfactory and that all other requirements of Article 4, Chapter 32, Title 58.1 of the Code of Virginia and Chapter 848 of the Codified Ordinances of Loudoun County, Virginia are complied with.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the recitals and the mutual benefits, covenants and terms herein contained, the parties hereby covenant and agree as follows:

1. This Agreement shall apply to all of the real estate described in Exhibit A.
2. The Owner agrees that during the term of this Agreement:
 - a. there shall be no change in the use or uses of the Property that exist as of the date of this Agreement to any use that would not qualify as an open-space use.
 - b. there shall be no display of billboards, signs or other advertisements on the Property, except to (i) state solely the name of the Owner and the address of the Property; (ii) advertise the sale or lease of the Property; (iii) advertise the sale of goods or services produced pursuant to the permitted use of the Property, or (iv) provide warnings. No sign shall exceed four feet by four feet.
 - c. there shall be no construction, placement or maintenance of any structure on the Property unless such structure is either: (i) on the Property as of the date of this Agreement; or (ii) is related to and compatible with the open-space uses of the Property which this Agreement is intended to protect or provide for.
 - d. there shall be no accumulations of trash, garbage, ashes, waste, junk, abandoned property or other unsightly or offensive material on the Property.
 - e. there shall be no filling, excavating, mining, drilling, removal of topsoil, sand, gravel, rock minerals or other materials which alters the topography of the Property, except as required in the construction of permissible building, structures and features under this Agreement.
 - f. there shall be no construction or placement of fences, screens, hedges, walls or other similar barriers which materially obstruct the public's view of scenic areas of the Property.
 - g. there shall be no removal or destruction of trees, shrubs, plants and other vegetation, except that the Owner may:
 - (i) engage in agricultural, horticultural or silvicultural activities, provided that there shall be no cutting of trees, other than selective cutting and salvage of dead or dying trees within 100 feet of a scenic river, a scenic highway, a Virginia Byway or public property listed in the approved State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (Virginia Outdoors Plan); and
 - (ii) remove vegetation which constitutes a safety, a health or an ecological hazard.

- h. there shall be no industrial or commercial activities conducted on the Property, except for the continuation of agricultural, horticultural or silvicultural activities; or activities that are conducted in a residence or an associated outbuilding such as a garage, smokehouse, small shop or similar structure which is permitted on the property.
 - i. there shall be no separation or split-off of lots, pieces or parcels from the Property. The Property may be sold or transferred during the term of this Agreement only as the same entire parcel that is the subject of this Agreement; provided, however, that the Owner may grant to a public body or bodies open-space, conservation or historic preservation easements which apply to all or part of the Property.
- 3. This Agreement shall be effective upon acceptance by the County; provided, however, that the real estate tax for the Property shall not be extended on the basis of its use value until the next succeeding tax year following timely application by the Owner for use assessment and taxation in accordance with Chapter 848 of the Codified Ordinances of Loudoun County, Virginia. Thereafter, this Agreement shall remain in effect for a term of _____ consecutive years.
- 4. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as giving to the public a right to enter upon or to use the property or any portion thereof, except as the Owner may otherwise allow, consistent with the provisions of this Agreement.
- 5. The County shall have the right at all reasonable times to enter the Property to determine whether the Owner is complying with the provisions of this Agreement.
- 6. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to create in the public or any member thereof a right to maintain a suit for any damages against the Owner for any violation of this Agreement.
- 7. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to permit the Owner to conduct any activity or to build or maintain any improvement which is otherwise prohibited by law.
- 8. If any provision of this Agreement is determined to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby.
- 9. The provisions of this Agreement shall run with the land and be binding upon the parties, their successors, assigns, personal representatives, and heirs.
- 10. Words of one gender used herein shall include the other gender, and words in the singular shall include words in the plural, whenever the sense requires.
- 11. This Agreement may be terminated in the manner provided in §15.2-4314 of the Code of Virginia for withdrawal of land from an agricultural, a forestal or an agricultural and forestal district.

12. Upon termination of this Agreement, the Property shall thereafter be assessed and taxed at its fair market value, regardless of its actual use, unless the County determines otherwise in accordance with applicable law.
13. Upon execution of this agreement, it shall be recorded with the record of land titles in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Loudoun County, Virginia, at the Owner's expense.
14. **NOTICE: WHEN THE OPEN-SPACE USE OR USES BY WHICH THE PROPERTY QUALIFIED FOR ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION ON THE BASIS OF USE CHANGES TO A NONQUALIFYING USE OR USES, OR WHEN THE ZONING FOR THE PROPERTY CHANGES TO A MORE INTENSIVE USE AT THE REQUEST OF THE OWNER. THE PROPERTY, OR SUCH PORTIONS OF THE PROPERTY WHICH NO LONGER QUALIFIES, SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ROLL-BACK TAXES IN ACCORDANCE WITH §58.1-3237 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA. THE OWNER SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ALL OF THE OBLIGATIONS AND LIABILITIES OF SAID CODE SECTION.**

_____(SEAL)
Owner

_____(SEAL)
Owner

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN

BY: _____

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN

STATE OF VIRGINIA, to-wit:

I, _____, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, do hereby certify that this day personally appeared before me in my said jurisdiction, _____, Owner, whose name is signed to the above Agreement.

Given under my hand this the _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary public

My commission expires: _____

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN

STATE OF VIRGINIA, to-wit:

I, _____, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, do hereby certify that this day personally appeared before me in my said jurisdiction, _____, Owner, whose name is signed to the above Agreement.

Given under my hand this the _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary public

My commission expires: _____

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN

STATE OF VIRGINIA, to-wit:

I, _____, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, do hereby certify that this day personally appeared before me in my said jurisdiction, _____, whose name is signed to the above Agreement.

Given under my hand this the _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary public

My commission expires: _____

Exhibit A

Openspaceagreement